GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4624
ANSWERED ON:18.04.2001
REVIVAL OF SAARC
AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA;AVSM, BRIG.(RETD.) KAMAKHYA PRASAD SINGH DEO;DR. KIRIT SOMAIYA;JASWANT SINGH YADAV;RUPCHAND PAL;SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (PATIL)

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has agreed to the Sri Lankan request for lifting SAARC out of limbo;

(b) if so, the details therof;

(c) whether India is likely to participate in the Standing Committee meet of the Body in May this year;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether a long interval in interaction between the Member Countries of SAARC has put in limbo the decisions already taken in the previous SAARC summit;

(f) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken in this regard specially by India; (g) whether the government have taken any initiatives for holding the postponed SAARC Summit; and (h) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI U.V.KRISHNAM RAJU)

(a), (b),(c)&(d) During the visit to India of the Sri Lankan President, Mrs Chandrika Kumaratunga, last month, it was agreed that a meeting of the SAARC Standing Committee of Foreign Secretaries may be scheduled within the next few months in consultation with SAARC Member States. The Meeting is likely to be held in early June, 2001.

(e)&(f) Although the Eleventh SAARC Summit had to be postponed, the technical and functional cooperation under SAARC has continued. The SAARC Technical Committees, which are the primary mechanisms of the SAARC Integrated Programme of Actior (SIPA), have already held several meetings since last year. The First Meeting of the SAARC Technical Committee on Communications and Transport, the First Meeting of the Technical Committee on Science and Technology and the First Meeting of the Technical Committee on Environment, Meteorology and Forestry were held on January 5-6, 2001 in Islamabad, onJanuary 23-25, 2001 in Delhi and on February 20-21, 2001 in Thimphurespectively. These Meetings were attended by all Member States. Additionally, a number of other Expert-level meetings have been held, including the 4th Meeting of the SAARC Network of Researchers on Global Financial and Economic Issues on March 22-23, 2001, in Delhi; and the 8th Meeting of the SAARC Fooc Security Reserve Board on April 10-11, 2001, in Kathmandu.The 2nd Meetingof the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) is scheduled to be held on May 11-12, 2001.

(g)&(h) No decision has been taken on holding the next SAARC Summit.